

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress  
1st Session

**Vote No. 85**

May 22, 1997, 8:37 pm  
Page S-4988 Temp. Record

## BUDGET RESOLUTION/Point of Order Against Deficits Post-2002

**SUBJECT:** Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1998-2002 . . . S.Con. Res. 27. Lautenberg motion to table the Inhofe amendment No. 301.

### ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 52-47

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported, S. Con Res. 27, the Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal year 1998, will balance the Federal budget in fiscal year (FY) 2002 by slowing the overall rate of growth in spending over the next 5 years to below the rate of growth in revenue collections (the Congressional Budget Office recently revised upwards its 5-year revenue estimate by \$225 billion).

**The Inhofe amendment** would make it out of order to consider in the Senate any budget resolution or budget resolution conference report, or any amendment or motion thereto, for fiscal year 2002 or any fiscal year thereafter that would cause a unified budget deficit for the budget year or any of the 4 fiscal years following the budget year. The point of order would not apply in any year in which a declaration of war was in effect. The Senate could waive this point of order by a three-fifths majority (60) vote of Members duly chosen and sworn.

Debate on a first-degree amendment to a budget resolution is limited to 2 hours. Debate was further limited on the Inhofe amendment by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Lautenberg moved to table the amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

**Those favoring** the motion to table contended:

Argument 1:

We oppose this amendment both because it would impose a supermajority vote requirement and because it is premature. This budget resolution balances the budget in 5 years. It contains projections for subsequent years, but those projections are much more

(See other side)

YEAS (52)			NAYS (47)			NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (13 or 24%)	Democrats (39 or 87%)		Republicans (41 or 76%)	Democrats (6 or 13%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
Bennett	Akaka	Inouye	Abraham	Inhofe	Feingold	Coats- <sup>2</sup>	
Bond	Baucus	Johnson	Allard	Jeffords	Glenn		
Campbell	Biden	Kennedy	Ashcroft	Kempthorne	Kohl		
Chafee	Bingaman	Kerrey	Brownback	Kyl	Robb		
Collins	Boxer	Kerry	Burns	Lott	Torricelli		
Domenici	Breaux	Landrieu	Cochran	Mack	Wyden		
Gorton	Bryan	Lautenberg	Coverdell	McCain			
Hatch	Bumpers	Leahy	Craig	McConnell			
Lugar	Byrd	Levin	D'Amato	Murkowski			
Roberts	Cleland	Lieberman	DeWine	Nickles			
Smith, Gordon	Conrad	Mikulski	Enzi	Roth			
Specter	Daschle	Moseley-Braun	Faircloth	Santorum			
Stevens	Dodd	Moynihan	Frist	Sessions			
	Dorgan	Murray	Gramm	Shelby			
	Durbin	Reed	Grams	Smith, Bob			
	Feinstein	Reid	Grassley	Snowe			
	Ford	Rockefeller	Gregg	Thomas			
	Graham	Sarbanes	Hagel	Thompson			
	Harkin	Wellstone	Helms	Thurmond			
	Hollings		Hutchinson	Warner			
			Hutchison				

#### EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business  
2—Necessarily Absent  
3—Illness  
4—Other

#### SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea  
AN—Announced Nay  
PY—Paired Yea  
PN—Paired Nay

speculative. It is difficult to say exactly what will happen in the future. We are not willing to impose a binding requirement against deficit spending on future legislators when we do not know what type of economic, national security, or other considerations they might face. For instance, 5 years from now there might be a huge recession, and Congress might decide it needs to have massive deficit spending to get the economy moving again. Under the Inhofe amendment, though, unless 60 or more Senators agreed, they would not be able to deficit-spend. We do not think it is right for us in 1997 to bind Senators in 2002 and beyond on budget decisions. Therefore, we urge our colleagues to table the Inhofe amendment.

Argument 2:

We reluctantly must oppose the Inhofe amendment. Many Senators are strongly opposed to supermajority vote requirements on budgeting. Adding this amendment to the resolution would therefore constitute a major change to the compromise terms that have been accepted on all sides. We will gladly join our colleagues on future efforts to pass such points of order, but in this case we must vote against their amendment.

**Those opposing** the motion to table contended:

The Inhofe amendment would make it out of order, starting in 2002, for the Senate to consider a budget that would result in deficits in any of the 5 years that it covered. A three-fifths majority vote would be required to waive this point of order. This amendment would do more than look forward; it would put great pressure on the Senate to stick with the plan to balance the budget by 2002 rather than have to make huge cuts in 2002 to get to balance in 1 year. Earlier this year 66 Senators thought that balancing the budget was such an important issue that they were willing to put this requirement into the Constitution, also starting in 2002. Logically, those same Senators should support this amendment. The only argument that those Senators can make against the Inhofe amendment is that it violates the budget agreement on this resolution. We do not think they are correct, because the amendment would not apply to any of the areas that were in dispute. The new spending, the tax cuts, and the entitlement restraints that were decided upon would not be affected. Passing the Inhofe amendment would make sure that once the budget was balanced it would stay that way. It would be a tragedy if Congress and the President were to declare success in 2002 and then start deficit-spending again. The Inhofe amendment would make it much more difficult to deficit-spend once the budget was finally balanced. We urge our colleagues to support this sensible amendment.